

# Sketch to Stretch

Here are some suggestions for ways to have students sketch to stretch—use a visual portrayal to extend literary understandings:

- Have students choose a scene or a passage and draw it, incorporating the passage into the visual.
- In groups, ask students to choose the "most important moment" in the book and represent it graphically. When the groups share their work with the class, they should explain the reasons for choosing the moment they did as well as why they portrayed it as they did.
- In groups or with a partner, ask students to choose a character and portray him or her non-representationally—using color, shape, and visual symbols. When they share their work, they should explain why they chose a particular character as well as the artistic choices they made for their portrayal.
- Have students do a visual sketch in their writer's notebooks in place of the customary written response. You may ask that they include a brief written commentary so you can understand their thinking.
- To begin a discussion, ask students to do a quick sketch of an issue in the reading that interests them. Use the sketches to begin the discussion.

To help students appreciate the strengths of sketch to stretch, you may wish them to consider ways in which their sketches helped them see or understand things in the literature that they might not have noticed before, or if they changed their plan for a sketch during the process of sketching and why.

# Sketch to Stretch

**Purpose:**

To encourage nonverbal response; to provide a framework for interpretive discussion of text.

**Materials:**

Any

**Procedures:**

1. Students read (or listen).
2. The teacher asks students to make quick sketches (realistic or symbolic) of something related to the text that they found interesting, important, etc.  
(Note: The teacher should announce and enforce a 3-minute time limit so that “art anxiety” doesn’t affect students. The teacher may also want to remind students that they can make graphs or other symbolic representations rather than pictures.)
3. Small groups (3-5 people) assemble. One at a time, group members show their sketches to others. Each student invites others to provide an interpretation of the sketch: “What is this a picture of?” “What do you think I found important/ interesting in the story?” After others give their interpretations, the illustrator is free to comment on the sketch.

For more information, see Rasinski, T., & Padak, N. (2000). *Effective reading strategies* (2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Sketch-to-Stretch

Sketch your response to the story in the box below. Remember not to worry about artistic quality, just sketch your reaction.



Describe your sketch and your reaction to the story below.

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